



From the desk of Mifflin Township Division of Fire Chief Timothy Taylor

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Mifflin Township Division of Fire provides fire protection and emergency medical services for the citizens of Mifflin Township which includes the city of Gahanna. During the past few weeks in Mifflin Township the trees are in full bloom, and grass is vividly green. That means it is time to get mowing. I'd like to share what I have learned about lawn mower safety during the years.

Lawn mowing is a potentially dangerous activity that should not be treated haphazardly. Last year, you may have heard about a young boy in the area who was run over by a mower by his neighbor who was mowing his lawn. Without the neighbor knowing, the boy curiously walked in behind him, and when he suddenly backed up, the little boy was run over. The boy lost his lower leg as a result so make sure that you, or any young person mowing for the first time, understand the dangers of mowing and keep the following tips in mind.

- Keep all safeguards attached and working.
- Always be alert and aware of what is around you while mowing.
- Take a moment to look around the area that you are mowing and make sure there are no hazards, including sticks, rocks or anything that can be thrown by the mower blades.
- Keep pets, people and especially children at a safe distance.
- Never mow in bare feet or sandals, and always wear safety glasses.
- Let the mower cool down before refueling or putting it back into storage.
- Never, never, never let anyone ride on a tractor or riding mower with you. (Even though this event makes for great photo opportunities. Take pictures while the riding mower is turned off.)
- Remember that injuries caused by a mower can have a permanent detrimental effect on someone's life.

On a final note, some parents wonder at what age a youth should be taught to mow and given that responsibility. I think that maturity level is a better guide to go by in regards to "mow-readiness" so the answer to that question is it varies based on each youth.

I hope these tidbits help keep you safe. Feel free to contact me at the Mifflin Division of Fire at (614) 471-8533 or taylor@mifftwp.org. Be sure to check the Mifflin Township website www.mifftwp.org for other helpful safety tips.

Happy mowing, and have a safe mowing season.

Chief Timothy Taylor